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WILLIAM J. CLINTON

**Proclamation 6824 of September 15, 1995**

**National Rehabilitation Week, 1995**

*By the President of the United States of America*

*A Proclamation*

National Rehabilitation Week offers us a unique opportunity each year to measure our progress on the long road to creating a totally accessible society in America. This year, as we also mark the 5th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the 75th anniversary of the Rehabilitation Act of 1920, we can look back with satisfaction on the tremendous advances we have made on our journey.

Because of the passage and implementation of these landmark pieces of legislation, millions of Americans with disabilities have received the training and skills to become competitive and productive employees. Working Americans who became disabled in mid-life have received the help they need to adapt to their changed circumstances and to resume their contributions to our society. Today, employers across the Nation are working closely with State rehabilitation agencies to ensure that men and women with disabilities are trained to succeed at the jobs of tomorrow.

Thanks largely to the efforts of people with disabilities, America has come a long way from the time when these citizens were kept out of sight and out of mind. Today, our Nation's disability policies emphasize inclusion, independence, and empowerment. Our laws declare that Americans with disabilities have a fundamental right to full equality—and are entitled to the same choices and opportunities as their fellow citizens who are not disabled.

But we still have a long way to travel before we reach our goal of full equality in fact as well as in law. Today, two-thirds of all persons with disabilities remain unemployed, although many of them already have received appropriate training and rehabilitative services. And even more distressing, millions of these individuals would find it difficult to work if a job were offered to them simply because our society has not instituted the changes needed to help them perform their work responsibilities.

People with disabilities want to work, and it is vital that we offer them the means to gain full employment. Not only is this the right thing to do, it is the prudent thing as well. If America is to continue to succeed in our rapidly changing global economy, we cannot afford to waste the talents, knowledge, vision, or abilities of a single individual.

Let us celebrate National Rehabilitation Week by rededicating ourselves to the spirit of equality. As we move toward the era of hope and opportunity promised by the 21st century, we must guarantee that every American has a share in that hope and ensure that the doors of opportunity are open to all. By empowering each person, including

those with disabilities, to live up to his or her full potential, we will infuse our Nation with fresh energy for the challenges before us.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 17 through September 23, 1995, as "National Rehabilitation Week." I call upon the people of the United States, including government officials, employers, educators, and volunteers, to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities honoring all those who work for self-determination, equal treatment, and full participation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twentieth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

**Proclamation 6825 of September 16, 1995**

## **Citizenship Day and Constitution Week, 1995**

*By the President of the United States of America*

### *A Proclamation*

Americans, unlike many other peoples, are linked to one another neither by the confines of geography nor by centuries of tradition. Instead, we base our citizenship on a foundation of shared ideals and ideas, bringing gifts from every country, race, and culture. Those whose ancestors came to these shores long ago and first-generation immigrants alike—all are bound by the unique set of principles set forth in the documents that established and continue to define this Nation.

We find our heritage in profound words: in the declaration that all men are created equal, endowed with unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; in the invitation of liberty extended to the tired, the poor, the huddled masses yearning to breathe free; and in the pledge to remain one Nation, under God, with liberty and justice for all.

Perhaps the greatest expression of our national identity is the United States Constitution. Adopted on September 17, 1787, the Constitution describes the parameters of our Government and the rights and responsibilities that accompany American citizenship. From its phrases we derive our precious rights to free expression and religious liberty, and we assume the responsibilities of electing our leaders and participating in the workings of government.

Yet the genius of the Constitution is not simply in forming "a more perfect Union," but in framing an ideal and providing a means for progress toward its realization. As Abraham Lincoln once stated, our Founding Fathers "meant to set up a standard maxim for free society, which should be familiar to all, and revered by all; constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and even though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated, and thereby constantly spreading and deep-